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WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS!

THE BEST CHRISTMAS YET.

MRS. HARRIET A. CHEEVER.

It was the day after Christmas, and Mr. Burleigh, returned from business, was putting on dressing-gown and slippers as he said cheerily:

"Well, wife, how have the children been to-day? Very happy, I take it, after all the fun of yesterday."

"Miserable, just miserable!" was the discouraged reply. "They've contended over their playthings, wishing in almost every case we had given them something different from the article received."

"The trouble is," the mother added, "our children have learned to expect too much, and are actually becoming exacting in their requirements."

"I always thought," said Mr. Burleigh, "that it was hardly possible to do too much for the benefit of young people.'

"And in certain directions it is impossible to do too much for them," his wife replied, "but the serious question for us to consider is, what is really for their benefit? I really believe that if Joe and Mamie Fred and Bessie, should fail to receive another single present for two, or even three years it would be the best thing for them possible. By that time they might be in a fit state to enjoy a few judiciously selected presents.

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Nearly a year had passed rapidly away. One morning about the first of December, while the family were gathered around the breakfast table, Mr. Burleigh gave a detailed account of a visit made the previous day at the house of a poor woman whose husband had died some months before.

And only the next morning again at breakfast, Mr. Burleigh had another story to tell of a family of emigrants who had settled in an alley at the rear of his store, and the father having been taken sick directly upon their arrival in a strange country, their condition was deplorable in the extreme. That same evening Mr. Burleigh had a long talk with his wife.

A morning or two later, Joe remarked with a merry chuckle.

"Oh, ho! Christmas is almost here, then hurrah for the Christmas tree!"

"Yes, hurrah for the Christmas tree!" echoed Fred.

But Mr. Burleigh remained quite sober in the midst of their pleased surmisings, and said seriously,

"I doubt very much if we have a Christmas tree this year."

"Why, papa Burleigh!" exclaimed a chorus of young voices.

"How many presents do you suppose the Meeker children will receive this year?" asked Mr. Burleigh, "the children of the widow about whom I told you a morning or two ago. Then there are the Switzenburr's, the forlorn foreigners whose father is still so very low that the city physician has doubts of his recovery.

"Well," broke in Joe, a troubled look on his face, "we can send some of our old playthings to the Meeker children; we always send some away."

"The Meekers need a great deal beside toys and such things," said Mr. Burleigh gravely.

"I don't see why we can't have a Christmas-tree, and help the poor folks too," said Mamie, with a rebellious look.

"Poor folks needn't expect Christmas presents," put in Frank.

"Not new ones," added Bessie.

Mr. Burleigh looked grieved. Had superabundance of needless gifts developed selfishness to such pitiless degree in his own dear children?

"What made Jesus Christ come down to earth?" suddenly asked their mother.

"To save sinners," promptly answered two or three voices.

"Did he please himself?"

"For even Christ pleased not himself," answered well-instructed Mamie and Bessie.

"Did he come to minister unto?"

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," again answered the little girls; the boys looked sullen and made no replies.

"Now, I have decided," began Mr. Burleigh, "to put a sum of money in your mother's hands, to be used in any way all you four can agree upon as being the best way and most acceptable one in the sight of God. If you decide that your customary presents cannot be dispensed with the week before Christmas, this money can be equally divided among you, and you can choose your own gifts. Or, if in a few days you conclude that, in view of the crowded state of the play-room, book-shelves and toy-closet, you will on the Christ-day strive to please others rather than yourselves, you can count on all needed advice and assistance from both mother and me. I leave the matter entirely with you."

"We don't know what those foreign folks want," said Joe doggedly.

"Oh, no," said Mr. Burleigh, pleasantly: "it will involve going to see them in order to find out. I would be happy to take you there any time; lads of fourteen and eleven are none too young to learn a little something of the necessities of the poor."

"Then I suppose girls of ten and twelve are none too young either," said their mother. "I'll take my little daughters to call on the Meekers any time they may wish to go."

The parents were painfully cognizant of the dissatisfied faces of the four children as they passed out of the dining-room, but no further notice was taken of them.

"Humph! pretty to do, I should think!" ejaculated Joe, as they filed disconsolately into the library. "No Christmas-tree, and no presents unless we buy them ourselves! Nice, isn't it, to see your Christmas money going to a lot of foreigners and beggars!"

"Taint gone yet," said Mamie.

"There's one thing about it," said Bessie, the youngest, "they'd be pretty sure to like whatever they got."

"I—was—thinking," began Mamie, thoughtfully, "how it would seem if I never had presents, to have some good, kind people come and give me lots of things that I liked and needed."

"That would be kinder nice," said Joe, looking a little mollified.

"Yes, and I suppose toys and candy are just as sweet and nice to poor folks as to us," said Bessie."

The children discussed but little else except the matter of the Christmas money for a day or two; then Mr. Burleigh improved an opportunity of taking the two lads to call at the Switzenburrs', and the same afternoon Mamie and Bessie went with their mother to the home of the Meekers.

"Did you notice, mamma," Mamie asked the next day, "how cold the room was at Mrs. Meeker's, and what a miserable thin-looking old quilt she had on the bed?"

"Yes, Mamie, I noticed it, and I have no doubt that miserable as it appeared it was the best quilt she owned. Suppose you and Bessie, with my assistance, make a pair of thick, warm comforters; it would not take very long, and would leave all the more money for other things than if we bought them ready made."

"Oh, delightful!" exclaimed Mamie, and off she ran to find Bessie, who was equally ready to put some work into their new plan.

It would take far too much space were half the details related of the next three weeks' doings at the Burleighs' house. But the children declared over and over again that they had never begun to feel so happy in anticipation of expected Christmas gifts as they did in looking forward to bestowing these real benefits upon others; and Joe declared with boyish eagerness that it seemed as if the day would never come.

At last all the arrangements were completed. On Christmas morning, Joe and Fred presented themselves at the barren home of the Switzenburrs, their arms filled with offerings in the way of toys, rice, sugar and candy. Soon after their arrival a waggon drove up, from which was handed out the materials for a goodly dinner,—baskets of coal, some wood and a bag of flour; then appeared some coarse but warm bedding.

As the different supplies were crowded into the two rooms, the little children fairly shouted for joy, while the poor father, slowly recovering from his long illness, raised his thin hands, ejaculating feebly: "Mine Gott! Oh, mine goot Gott! How we tanks thee:" and fourteen-year-old Joe, unused to such touching scenes, whispered huskily to Fred:

"I say, let's put out of this; it makes a feller want to blubber right out loud!"

But Fred, full of the joyous spirit of the scene, was saying to the German mother:

"I only wish I knew how to cook; I'd take hold and help you get the dinner."

But the blushing little woman replied briskly:

"Oh, I gooks vell 'nough ven I geds de tings to gook mit;" and finding that Joe had already skipped off, Fred followed him amidst a shower of imperfectly expressed feelings. Joe's double query, as Fred joined him, would have sounded incongruous enough to one unacquainted with its bearings:

"Well, Freddy, my boy, wasn't it most enough to break your heart, and didn't it make you fairly want to shout for joy!"

As they entered their own home Joe made another telling observation:

"See here, Fred, did ever this dear old house seem so warm, or smell so sweet, or look half so beautiful as it does this moment?"

And the merry-hearted Fred, impressed with Joe's serious manner, answered thoughtfully:

"Honestly, Joe, I was just thinking that myself."

Mamie's eyes looked a little red, but Bessie, all life and animation, sprang at once to her papa's knee, exclaiming:

"Oh, papa Burleigh, if you only could a-seen little Kittie and Jessie Meeker when we took out the candy bags! They just squealed! Mrs. Meeker, she couldn't say it when she tried to thank us for the comforters, and the provisions that came from

(Continued on Last Page.)

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON II.—JANUARY 13.

A SABBATH IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.—Mark 1: 21-31.

COMMIT VERSES 21, 22.

GOLDEN TEXT.

As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day.—Luke 4: 16.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Jesus and his religion are full of blessed words and works for all.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Mark 1: 12-20.
T. Mark 1: 21-31.
W. Matt. 8: 14-17.
Th. Luke 4: 31-41.
F. Ps. 103: 1-22.
Sa. Ps. 42: 1-12.
Su. Luke 1: 68-80.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

Jesus next spends the last part of a year and a half in Galilee. 21. *Capernaum:* a city on the north-west coast of the Sea of Galilee, supposed to have contained 30,000 inhabitants. *Synagogue:* a place of assembly, like our modern church. 22. *Taught.....authority:* he spoke as one who knew all things, for he did know. *Scribes:* the learned people of the Jews. 23. *Unclean Spirit:* called unclean, because he made the man unclean, unholy, vile, in body and soul. 25. *Hold thy peace:* the testimony of a bad spirit would injure a good cause. Even the truths a liar tells are thought to be lies. 26. *Cried with a loud voice:* an inarticulate cry, not a word of speech, which Jesus had forbidden. 27. *What new doctrine:* rather, *teaching;* referring to both matter and manner. *And they do obey him:* his miracles added authority to his words. 29. *Forthwith:* immediately. 30. *Sick of a fever:* Luke says, *a great fever:* they were common at Capernaum on account of the marshes. 31. *She ministered:* showing that the cure was instantaneous and complete. 32. *At even:* they came then, (1) as the pleasantest time for the sick; (2) the news had just got around; (3) their Sabbath ended at sunset, and the people felt at liberty to go abroad and do any needed work. 34. *Healed many:* showing the divine mission of Jesus, to heal, to help, to comfort, to save. *Divers:* various. *Suffered not the devils to speak:* they knew his true nature, but it would be bad to have the false and bad bear testimony to the true and holy.

SUBJECT: THE BLESSED WORDS AND WORKS OF JESUS.

QUESTIONS.

I. WONDERFUL WORDS OF LIFE (vs. 21, 22).—"And they went into Capernaum," from what place? (v. 16. Luke 4: 16, 31.) What can you tell about Capernaum? Point it out on the map.

How did Jesus spend his Sabbaths? What does his example teach us? Why ought we to attend church on the Sabbath? What is a synagogue?

What did the people think of Jesus' teaching? What is meant by doctrine here? Why were the people astonished? How did Jesus' teaching differ from that of the Jewish teachers? What peculiar authority had the teaching of Jesus?

II. DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL SPIRITS (vs. 23-28).—What happened while the services of the synagogue were in progress? What is an unclean spirit? Why are demons called unclean? How can such have power over men? What did this demon call Jesus? What contrast is expressed by unclean spirit and Holy One of God? Why did Jesus silence him? What did Jesus do for the man? What does this express to us of the power of Christ? (Eph. 6: 10-12.)

What comfort and help can we derive from this power in our Saviour? What are some of the evil spirits which need to be cast out in our day? Can Jesus cast them out?

III. SAVING HELP IN SICKNESS (vs. 29-31).—Which of Christ's disciples lived at Capernaum? Who was sick? Meaning of anon? Why did he take her by the hand? What shows that the cure was complete?

What are we told to do in sickness? (James 5: 14, 15.) How does Jesus help us now in our sicknesses? (James 5: 15; Rom. 8: 28; John 11: 4.)

IV. GREAT DELIVERANCES FROM MANY TROUBLES (vs. 32-34).—Who gathered around Jesus in the evening? Why did they wait till after sunset? In what way did the well help the sick? What example is this for us?

What kind of diseases were healed? What does this healing show as to the character of Christ? As to the compassion of God? (Ps. 103: 2-5.) Does Christianity still do this same work of healing? (John 14-12.) In what ways?

In what respects is sin like a disease? How does healing the body typify the healing of the soul? How does relieving the bodily wants of men aid us in saving them from sin?

LESSON III.—JANUARY 20.

HEALING OF THE LEPER.—Mark 1: 35-45.

COMMIT VERSES 40, 41.

GOLDEN TEXT.

As soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.—Mark 1: 42.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Sin is a terrible evil; but Jesus will save all who go to him in faith.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Mark 1: 35-45.
T. Matt. 4: 23-25; 8: 1-4.
W. Luke 4: 42-44; 5: 12-15.
Th. Luke 17: 11-19.
F. Matt. 15: 21-31.
Sa. Ezek 36. 22-32.
Su. Eph. 2: 1-10.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

35. *A great while before day:* this was Jesus' only method of being alone for prayer and communion with God. Every one needs solitary seasons of prayer. *And there prayed:* like us, Jesus needed communion with God. Especially as now he was about to enter upon a new plan of work, and go forth with his disciples on their first missionary tour. 36. *And Simon:* Peter, as usual, taking the lead. 38. *Therefore came I forth:* from heaven and his Father. He came to teach and preach to all. 40. *A leper:* one afflicted with the leprosy, a foul, deforming, incurable, hereditary, contagious, painful disease that shut men out from the companionship of the pure. *If thou wilt, thou canst:* this was the first time a leper had asked to be healed, so far as recorded; but the man knew that many had been healed of terrible and deadly diseases by Jesus, and therefore knew he could heal him. But he feared that Jesus would not want to help a deformed, impure outcast. 41. *Touched him:* to show that the healing came from him. It expressed Jesus' compassion. It could not defile Jesus, for the curative power was in him. *I will:* men healed by instrumentalities; Jesus by the act of his will. 44. *Say nothing to any man:* (1) He must not touch others till he was ceremonially clean. (2) Jesus did not wish to call attention to his miracles, but to lay emphasis on his teaching. (3) If it would draw so many to be healed that he would have no time to preach. *Offer for thy cleansing:* (Lev. 14: 4-7.) *For a testimony:* he must go to Jerusalem, and let the authorized priests declare the healing perfect. It testified also that Jesus obeyed the law.

SUBJECT: AN OBJECT LESSON OF SIN AND SALVATION.

QUESTIONS.

I. PREPARATION FOR WORK BY PRAYER (v. 35).—Where did Jesus go early the next morning? Why did he rise so early? Why go to a solitary place? What need did Jesus have of prayer? (Heb. 4: 15.) Can we work well for Christ without much prayer? Why not? Why do we need secret prayer as well as public worship? What command did Jesus give about this? (Matt. 6: 6.) How many and what lessons do we learn from this example of Christ?

II. CARRYING THE GOSPEL TO ALL MEN (vs. 36-39.)—Who noted Jesus' absence, and went out to find him? What did they say to Jesus? Why did the people seek Jesus? Was this a reason why Jesus should go out and preach?

What did Jesus now propose to do? What reason did he give? How long did this missionary tour last? Over what region did it extend? Why is casting out devils mentioned again? How would his healing help his preaching? In what ways is the religious work of saving men aided by ministering to their temporal wants? Should the two always go together?

III. THE LEPROSY: A TYPE OF SIN (v. 40.)—What one incident of this tour is told? What is a leper? Are there any such in our day? Describe the leprosy. Show how it is a type of sin in its all-pervasive loathsomeness and impurity (Rom. 1: 29-32; Matt. 15: 19); its being incurable by human power (Rom. 7: 24, 25); its contagiousness (1 Cor. 15: 33); its being often hereditary (Rom. 5: 12); its deforming effects; its shutting out from the companionship of the pure. (Rev. 21: 27.)

IV. THE CURE: A TYPE OF SALVATION (vs. 40-44).—What did the leper say to Jesus? Did these words show faith? In what respects was this leper an example of the way in which the sinner should come to Christ? How did Jesus heal him? Why did he touch him? What was the effect? What did Jesus tell him to do? Why must he say nothing? What offering must he make? Where? How would this be a testimony unto them? To what should every converted sinner testify? Did the man obey? What were the effects of his disobedience?

LESSON CALENDAR.

(First Quarter, 1859.)

1. Jan. 6.—The Mission of John the Baptist.—Mark 1: 1-11.
2. **Jan. 13.—A Sabbath in the Life of Jesus.—Mark 1: 21-34.**
3. **Jan. 20.—Healing of the Leper.—Mark 1: 35-45.**
4. Jan. 27.—Forgiveness and Healing.—Mark 2: 1-12.
5. Feb. 3.—The Parable of the Sower.—Mark 4: 10-20.
6. Feb. 10.—The Fierce Demoniac.—Mark 5: 1-20.
7. Feb. 17.—The Timid Woman's Touch.—Mark 5: 25-34.
8. Feb. 24.—The Great Teacher and the Twelve.—Mark 6: 1-13.

THE HOUSEHOLD.

TELLING THE STORY.

Little Blue-eyes is sleepy,
Come here and be rocked to sleep;
Shall I sing to you, darling, or tell you
The story of little Bo-Peep?
Or the cows that got into the meadow,
Boy Blue, fast asleep in the hay?
If I'm to be storyteller,
What shall I tell you, pray?

"Tell me"—the blue eyes opened
Like pansies when they blow—
"Of the baby in the manger,
The little child-Christ, you know.
I like to hear that 'tory
The best of all you tell,"
And the little one nestled closer,
As the twilight shadows fell.

Then I told my darling over
The old, old tale again
Of the babe born in the manger,
And the Christ who died for men
Of the great warm heart of Jesus,
And the children whom he blest,
Like the blue-eyed boy who listened
As he lay upon my breast.

And I prayed, as my darling slumbered,
That this child, with eyes so sweet,
Might learn from his Saviour lessons,
And sit at the Master's feet.
Pray God he may never forget it,
But always love to hear
The old and beautiful story,
That now to him is dear.

—*Eben E. Rexford, in Youth's Companion.*

SUNDAY DINNERS.

A writer in *Woman's Work* writes as follows: "On the Sabbath the busy housewife should rest, expand her soul, and let the sweet hallowed influences of that holy day lift her mind above the every-day cares of life. She should receive that spiritual aid and comfort which will enable her to meet bravely the trials of another week.

"How much better to have our children remember that mother set apart that day for soul culture, for long, quiet talks with her little ones, impressing upon their young minds that it was a day of rest, but not idleness. In some respects it is a busy day for us, but how like a green oasis in the desert it is compared to six days of labor.

"I prepare our Sabbath dinner on Saturday, and if you will try my plan once you will scarcely care to go back to hot dinners. I bake a loaf of bread and a cake and prepare meat in some form—ham, beef, tongue or chicken. It is then I use my preserves, jellies, pickles and canned fruits. There are so many dainty desserts to be eaten cold, and with iced tea, milk or lemonade, an excellent dinner can be gotten up on short notice. I often stew a chicken on Saturday, seasoning with salt, pepper and butter, but omitting milk. When nearly done, take off and set in the cellar, covering it close. Sabbath, build a brisk fire of kindlings, put on chicken with milk, adding thickening, and let it boil up; or add drop-dumplings if liked; this makes a good relishable dish, and with but little trouble. Then cook a can of corn or tomatoes, and you have an excellent dinner."

CARE IN USING CANNED FOODS.

When a person who does not know how to use canned fruits, meats and vegetables gets "poisoned," he charges the fault upon the can or the soldering; he seems to be utterly unconscious, because, ignorant of his own fault in the case. In the use of canned foods certain precautions must be observed. The food must be turned out of the can, as soon as opened. Never on any account add vinegar, sauces, etc., to canned foods while they are in the tins, and if from forgetfulness it is done, never allow such mixtures to remain in the cans an hour or so. Canned foods are put up as fresh as possible and after they are opened will not keep as long as people generally think they will, with the exception of sardines, which may be kept several days.

A person should use the same common sense in eating canned fruits, vegetables and meats that is used in regard to food not canned, and that sense should be sound in either case. A proper use of the nose and eyes is enough to detect bad food whether canned or not, though some people are foolish enough to think that canning guarantees the keeping of food after the cans are opened as well as before.

—*Selected.*

THE CHRISTMAS ANTHRACITE.

He left a load of anthracite
In front of a poor woman's door,
When the deep snow, frozen and white,
Wrapped street and square, mountain and moor.
That was his deed;
He did it well;
"What was his creed?"
I cannot tell.

Blessed "in his basket and in his store,"
In sitting down and in rising up;
When more he got he gave the more,
Withholding not the crust and cup.
He took the lead
In each good task.
"What was his creed?"
I did not ask.

His charity was like the snow,
Soft, white and silent in its fall!
Not like the noisy winds that blow
From shivering trees the leaves; a pall
For flower and weed,
Drooping below,
"What was his creed?"
The poor may know.

He had great faith in loaves of bread,
For hungry people young and old,
And hope inspired, kind words he said
To those he sheltered from the cold.
For we must feed
As well as pray.
"What was his creed?"
I cannot say.

In words he did not put his trust,
His faith in words he never writ,
He loved to share his cup and crust
With all mankind who needed it.
In time of need
A friend was he,
"What was his creed?"
He told not me.

—*Anon.*

THE OPIUM HABIT.

(*Letter in the Housekeeper.*)

DEAR FRIENDS,—Every day earnest advocates of temperance are entering the lecture field, and we hear some loud notes of remonstrance against the use of tobacco; while against the use of opium we seldom hear more than a few faint murmurs of disapprobation. One great reason is because its use can be carried on with such secrecy as to make it impossible to ascertain, with any degree of certainty, how many are addicted to it; and it is seldom that we meet with such an instance of charming simplicity and frankness as it was my lot to meet last winter. A country school teacher, ordinarily intelligent, we will suppose, was staying with us over night. When I showed her to her room and expressed the hope that she would rest well, she replied that she did not expect to, as she taught school all night usually. I remarked that "all day ought to be enough," and laughingly inquired if she ever took anything for her nerves. This was her answer: "Yes, when I am at home my friends are in the habit of giving me morphine powders." I could say nothing more in the face of such charming candor, so I left her. Hers was probably not an extreme case, but she had made a beginning and already felt the lack of the drug when the usual hour for taking it arrived. Ah! It is the first steps that are so hard to retrace! And, alas, it is only the first steps that are possible to retrace.

Often the first introduction is given by the family doctor, one whom you have trusted, perhaps, for years. Surely, the victim thinks, it is all right if he says "take it whenever you feel the old pain coming on." And again, the patient often takes it, entirely unconscious of its name or nature until, before he is aware, it has become a necessity. Under the head of opium I would put all stimulants that partake of its nature, from the paregoric that the mother keeps in the house for baby's use (but who takes it herself until the bottle goes so often to the druggist's to be refilled that they begin to see and understand what it all means), up to the pure drug itself, one taste of which ought to be enough to last an ordinary life-time.

I shall never forget my first term at school. There was one small boy of about my own age who could not keep awake. He would go to sleep at the first unoccupied moment, and various were the methods adopted by the teacher to rouse him. She even resorted to sprinkling cold water on his face. I afterward learned that his stupidity was caused by his mother's giving him large doses of soothing syrup when an infant, to quiet him in order that she might work! In this case, of course, the treatment not being continued, the boy outgrew the effects of it in a great degree; but the same inactivity of brain is noticeable in the slave to opium. The same listless indifference and deadening of the physical powers. This refers only to cases that have passed the boundary line from which there would seem to be no returning. The time to make a brave fight for freedom is before this point has been reached.

About a year ago I was an interested observer of a scene that fixed itself firmly in my memory, and relates particularly to this matter. A physician of the highest standing had been called some ten miles out into the country to visit a sick woman, and, after he had prescribed for the patient and was about to start out again, he complained of a severe neuralgic pain in the head, and said he believed he would take a little morphine, as it had relieved him immediately on former occasions. It was the uncommon spectacle of a doctor taking his own medicine, and I have wondered many times since whether he had conquered the habit, if habit it had become, or whether the habit had conquered him. I once knew a person long addicted to its use, who, on one occasion, found herself without means to obtain more of the precious drug. For two days she walked the floor, in an agony of mind and body, unable to concentrate her thoughts upon anything else. Anxious relatives did all in their power to relieve the physical suffering, but all to no purpose. At last the secret came out. A messenger was dispatched for opium, and peace and quiet reigned again. I was quite young at the time, but it made a profound impression on my mind, and I firmly resolved that I would never allow myself to be such a slave to appetite as that. What "reasonable reason" can there be for any sane person thus weaving about herself bonds which can not be broken, and which drag down the mind as well as the body to the lowest possible depths? Back of all effects we are to look for causes, and, indirectly bearing upon this subject, we find one great fault in the prevailing methods of rushing through life. Our work is done with a rush, our meals all eaten in a rush, and even our spare moments for pleasure, if indeed we have any are spent in rushing around, the only object seeming to be to crowd as much as is possible into a short space of time, and then back again to our work, not at all refreshed, but wearied in mind and body. Much better would it be, if only a short time can be spared, to spend it in bed where rest can be found, which is what the working woman needs much more than recreation. What matter if the world call it laziness? If the increased happiness of yourself and family is the direct result, you may snap your fingers at the world.

When women have learned to take things easy, and remember it is worry, not work, that kills, we shall have fewer cases of nervous prostration, nervous debility, etc., and there will be less need of anything in the character of a stimulant, especially among the weaker sex. And the advice holds good for the lords of creation as well. Take time for an outing occasionally Never mind if you don't make your fortune this year or next. You will be the better prepared to enjoy it when it does come if you are not worn out with the effort put forth to gain it. With plenty of good, wholesome food and the requisite amount of rest, you ought to be able to get through any ordinary amount of work without the aid of stimulants. If you cannot, look closely for the cause and try to find some other remedy with less attendant dangers than stimulants in any form.

NELLIE SHERWOOD.

It is with sadness that we confess our belief that this dreadful habit is on the increase among women, and we hope our friends will sound their warning against this terrible evil far and wide; for not only the victims themselves suffer and make all around them bow their heads with shame and grief, but the innocent little children, the unborn babes, by the frowning law of heredity are sure to be injured in mind and body. You husbands, who permit your wives to overwork, take warning before it is too late; for it is tired, overworked, worn-out women who seek the fictitious strength of this terrible drug. Tired women fly to it as men fly to the use of intoxicating liquors, and the habit, once formed, binds as strongly as the chains of the liquor habit. It first exhilarates and makes them "feel new," and then a larger dose produces a condition on the same plan as drunkenness. One is opium drunkenness, the other alcoholic drunkenness, that is all the difference. Women take to this form of intoxication more than to the liquor habit (though that numbers its victims by the thousands, too) because of the secrecy with which it can be carried on, in the early stages. No rank smelling breath betrays the mother; nobody suspects the disgraceful truth till she begins to "act queer," or till some emergency makes it impossible for her to get the drug. Then there is a state of affairs which can only be compared to delirium tremens. We know of just such a case. A tired out, hard-working farmer's wife became almost insane through the overtaxing of her vital forces. She became addicted to the use of the drug in the form of chloral, and after that there was no living with her if it was not in the house. Fortunately her children were nearly all grown up, and in a few years, death mercifully closed the scene. Naturally, she was a mild, pleasant industrious woman. What a cruel fate is this! And how can we help exclaiming against our present mode of life when there is not one woman in twenty who is not cruelly over-worked? What is the remedy?—*Editor Housekeeper.*

PUZZLES.—NO. 26.

CHRISTMAS ANAGRAM.

A harbinger blest is the theme of my song,
A message it sends all the ages along—
A message of pardon, of peace, and of love,
To children on earth from a father above.

Blessings come from thee, thou dweller afar,
Beauty and gladness thy followers are;
Hope for the hopeless, forgiveness for those
Who will the grace of acceptance disclose.

Now, in the season of feasting and joy,
Let us the pleasure of *giving* employ,
Sharing our blessings, our gifts, and our gladness
With lonely ones, drooping in sorrow and sadness.

Spirit of Christmas! abide with us yet,
Even should trouble our pathway beset.
There with *the best helm of earth* for our guide,
We will be blest whatever betide.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

1. The calendar of years of war and peace.
2. A gift that oftentimes turns friends to foes.
3. To draw together with a sure decrease.
4. The poet's word for crowned heads' repose.
5. To punish where just punishment is due.
6. Where pictures numberless are daily made.
7. Though ever distant, ever still in view,
My *whole* midwinter brings—'tis no'or delayed.
In different ways, I pray you mark,
My meaning's twice conveyed.

HIDDEN HEATHEN DEITIES.

1. Such a chill, especially that which I had last night, I never felt before.
2. That hateful name has no mercy in it.
3. He rang the bell on a windy night.
4. They have no right to libel me in the paper.
5. She wrote anacreontic poetry.
6. I hear she has left for Indiana.
7. Her lover atoned for the wrong he had done her.
8. You will always find me where business requires me.
9. That hateful name should perish.
10. Is sit a verb neuter? Peter says it is.
11. I admire that promise in which he confides.
12. Such floral beauties charm the sight.
13. Has the famous Macgregor gone South.
14. He became enamored with her beauty.
15. Said he, "Lena is the girl of my choice."
16. He romanced too much about her.
17. Little Anderson said they came to a tragic end.
18. I read Tupper's proverbial philosophy last week.
19. Such an inoffensive being should not have suffered as she did.
20. I often wonder at the strange assertions of the Greeks.
21. What you desire never can be had.
22. Let her go and enjoy herself.
23. She sang that song to enliven us.
24. The miner values that nugget at a hundred dollars.
25. Is Palestine a pasture land?
26. Let us stop and rest.
27. The tyrants can't disperse us, they are not able.
28. So London is to be your future residence?
29. Will you wear that vest again?
30. That noxious weed grew in a marshy place.
31. Was it peppermint he gave her?
32. It was pleasant to hear him tell one story after another about his strange adventures.

S. MOORE.

Quebec.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES.—NUMBER 25.

ENIGMA.—New ark, Newark.

BEHEADINGS.—1. Heart-ear. 2. smile-mile. 3. ball-all. 4. lash-ash. 5. brow-row. 6. wink-ink. 7. blink-link. 8. glance-lance. 9. stare-tare. 10. hair-air.

ENIGMA.—Search the Scripture.

A SPELLING LESSON.—TOBACCO.

PUZZLERS HEARD FROM.

Correct answers have been sent by Mary. E. Sparrow, Percy Morrison, Hannah E. Greene.

CHRISTMAS IN BETHLEHEM.

Bethlehem is an almost entirely Christian city, of five thousand inhabitants; these Christians belonging to the Roman Catholic, Greek, and Armenian Churches, there being only about one hundred Protestants, who are converts from these churches.

As we near the town on Christmas Eve, we see the road from Jerusalem covered with hundreds of pedestrians and equestrians, in almost every imaginable costume. They are all bound for Bethlehem, as it is customary for great numbers of the residents of Jerusalem to spend Christmas there, where the Roman Catholic Church celebrates it with great ceremony. The Catholics go there as worshippers, while hundreds of others go as spectators of the ceremonies. There being no vehicles of any kind between these two places, people have to get there on horses, donkeys, mules, and camels. Numbers of people walk to Bethlehem, as it is only a distance of five miles. The road has a gay appearance on this December afternoon. The sun is shining brightly and the fields are covered with white and pink crocuses. There go a party of European ladies and gentlemen, mounted on horseback; a company of desert Arabs, with large yellow silk handkerchiefs on their heads, tied on with black rope, made of camel's hair; some Russian pilgrims, wearing sheepskin dresses, with the wool inside; then a large party of native men and women, astride donkeys, without stirrups, the saddles having a large cushion in front to keep the rider from flying over his head when the donkey stumbles, which is often; and some stubborn ones insist on trotting near the edge of a deep ravine, down a hill, or on slippery rocks. Every donkey has bells round his neck, and a boy to run behind and poke him up with a sharp stick or long needle.

Our notice is attracted to a long line of horsemen. It is the Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem, going to Bethlehem. This procession is very grand, large, and variegated. A squad of mounted policemen, gayly attired, head the procession; cavalry; Bedouins, on their Arabian steeds. The Patriarch is clothed in his purple cloak and cardinal hat. A great company of bishops, priests and deacons are in his suite. Then follow a company of Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, dressed in fantastical Oriental garments, mounted on any beast they could get hold of.

Hundreds of Bethlehemites, of both sexes, all in gay holiday attire, now meet this procession, and salute them with songs, firing of guns, and drumming on drums, kettles, tin pans, and some bearing cymbals. They head the procession, dancing, singing, clapping their hands, till they enter Bethlehem; and as they pass through the streets they are greeted with cheers and with songs from the windows and house-tops, by the women and children.

The Catholic, Greek, and Armenian monasteries and the great complex Church of the Nativity are all under one roof, which covers the supposed stable-cave where Christ was cradled. They all form a great fortress-like edifice, in front of which is a large open square, which is now crowded with people, almost of every description. Turkish soldiers, ranged in lines; and a procession of monks and priests, gorgeously attired—who meet the Jerusalem Patriarch with a great deal of ceremony. Then all the guests enter the convent, where they are hospitably received.

The Church of the Nativity was built by the Empress Helena, in the fourth century. In the fifth it was destroyed; then it was restored in A. D. 630, by the Emperor Justinian. It is a magnificent building, of very fine architecture. The grand service begins about midnight, the church being brilliantly lit up. Flowers and evergreens adorn the altar, pillars, and chandeliers. The crowd is so great that there is barely standing room, and most of the people are holding lighted wax tapers, some of which are adorned with sprays of flowers. It is a marvel that they don' so fire to each other. The service is conducted by the Patriarch, during which several monks appear, dressed in furs, representing the shepherds. A song of glorious harmony suddenly bursts out from the hundreds of priests assembled, singing the "*Gloria in Excelsis.*" It is caught up by the worshippers and the scene for a few moments is thrilling. The service continues till about three o'clock, when it is ended by a procession, in which the Patriarch carries a waxen image, representing Christ, in a golden crib. It is taken down into the grotto or manger, which is hewn in the natural rock and supposed to be the manger in which Jesus was laid. Gold and silver lamps are suspended all over the place, which are kept burning night and day. Another ceremony is performed in the grotto, laying the image into the manger, and the Patriarch wraps it up in swaddling-clothes, after which a hymn of praise is sung, and the bells burst out in merry chimes, announcing the glad tidings. The monks and priests embrace each other, saying: "Peace, peace." The crowd of worshippers do the same, and amid songs of rejoicings, the chimes of bells, and the rich peals of the organ, the people disperse, wishing each other a Merry Christmas.

The Protestant community also have a service in their chapel, which is decorated with evergreens; and it is delightful to attend divine worship there on Christmas Day, and join with the congregation of natives in commemorating the birth of Christ in the very town he was born in, and sing with them the anthem "Hark! the herald angels sing," which is sung in Arabic. A great many people spend part of the morning at the Fields of the Shepherds and the "Glory to God in the Highest" is sung by the assembled worshippers. It is a charming picture, being a very tranquil and grassy spot, which aids the *imagination* to see the scene told in Luke ii.

But it is not only one Christmas that is commemorated in Bethlehem, for twelve days later the Greek church commemorates it, with perhaps even more pomp than the Catholic; then, two weeks later, the Armenians observe theirs; so that Bethlehem is crowded with thousands of spectators and worshippers for about four weeks.
—*Lydia M. Finkelstein.*

A TELEPHONE MESSAGE.

"Ah! Here's the little round thing my papa talks into
To tell the folks down town what he wants to have them do.
I'm going to try myself,—now let me get a chair,
And then I'll stand on tiptoe so I can reach up there.

"Hallo!—(that's what they all say)—you dear old Santa Claus
I'm going to have a little bit of talk with you, because
I want to tell you all about a little girl I know
Who never had a Christmas in her life—she told me so.

"I hardly could believe it, but she says 'tis really true,
I'm sure your always very kind, but I'm surprised at you,
That you should have forgotten such a little one! but still,
You have, perhaps, already all the stockings you can fill.

"But, could you go to her house instead of coming here?
For mamma says that Christmas is the time of all the year
For children to remember poor little girls and boys
Who never hang their stockings up for picture-books and toys.

"I want you, please, to carry her a doll with shining curls
And eyes that shut and open—that's the kind for little girls—
And a muff to warm her fingers, and a cunning little ring,
And a book with pretty verses—how she'll laugh, the little thing!

"And give her lots of goodies, too, because she's poor, you see,
And ought to have more sugar-plums than you could bring to me.
Now tell it on your fingers, and remember, as you go—
Just pack her little stocking to the very, very toe.

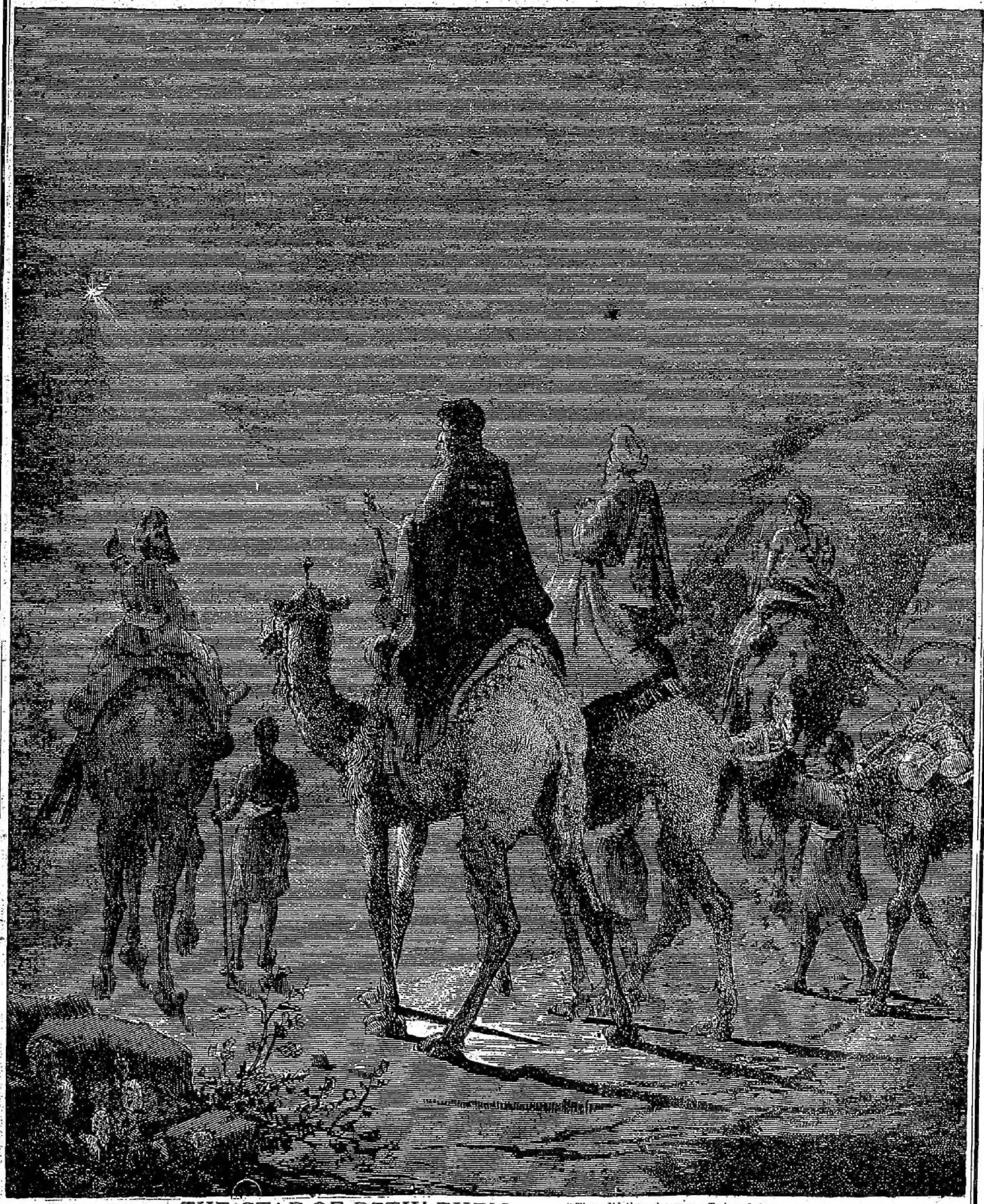
"That's all—only, Santa Claus, I just would like to say,
If you should have more presents than you need on Christmas Day,
And could leave me just a few as you pass the chimney—why,
Of course—I would be very glad indeed. Good-bye! Good-bye!"
—*Youth's Companion.*

GOOD READING.

There is no matter of such importance to young men as the early acquirement of the taste for good reading. Sir John Herschell says: "If I were to pray for a taste which would stand me in stead under every variety of circumstances, and be a source of happiness and choerfulness to me through life, and a shield against its ills, however things might go amiss and the world frown upon me, it would be a taste for reading. Give a man this taste and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making a happy man. You place him in contact with the best society in every period of history, with the wisest, the wittiest, the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters who have adorned humanity. You make him a denizen of all nations, a contemporary of all ages.

AFRICA RATHER THAN HEAVEN.

At the Age of sixty-seven years Bishop William Taylor says he would rather spend the next twenty years in Africa, among the savages, than in heaven, among the angels, so strong is his desire that the sable sons of Africa should be saved.



THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

"Then did the wise men offerings bring,
Where shone the star of Bethlehem."

THE SHEPHERD AND THE STARS.

BY GEORGE W. BUNGAY.

How glorious the midnight skies,
How vast the space of ligh unfurled:
The stars watch with unclouded eyes
The welfare of a sleeping world
The jewel of night's diadem
Is the soft star of Bethlehem.

The shepherds on the plains afar
Were watching their white flocks at night
When they beheld the rising star
That filled the space with heavenly light.
It was a lamp from heaven to them,
It was the star of Bethlehem.

They saw the heavenly host come down,
They heard the holy angels sing,
A King was born whom heaven will crown;
Then did the wise men offerings bring,
Myrrh, frankincense, and many a gem,
Where shone the star of Bethlehem.

The Child was in a humble shed
With lowing oxen in the stall,
A glory circle round his head;
He was indeed the King of all,
Worthy to wear the diadem,
The glorious star of Bethlehem.

"Peace upon earth, good-will to men,"
Was the theme of the angels' song,
The white-winged choir returned again
To heaven, singing their path along.
How white the light of that sweet gem,
The radiant star of Bethlehem!

From the low manger to the cross,
And from the cross the world around,
Where many deem their gain but loss,
The light of this fair star is found.
It is the lamp of heaven to them,
It is the star of Bethlehem!

—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

VIEW OF BETHLEHEM FROM THE SHEPHERD'S FIELD.

THE OLDEST CHRISTMAS IN THE WORLD.

BY FRED MYRON COLBY.

It is difficult to imagine Christmas where there is no cold weather and people wear muslin instead of nice, warm, comfortable wools and furs. But what would you think of observing a Christmas where there was no Christ, no cross, no babe in the manger, and no Santa Claus? Yet this is what they did in Egypt thousands of years before our Saviour was born. At least those old dwellers by the Nile, whose mummies are being unearthed in such *strange fashion to-day*, celebrated a December festival that was more generally observed even than ours. It was closely allied too in spirit to the modern Christmastide thus showing that however diverse in habits, customs, and religious ideas nations may be, still there are identical principles embraced by all that act as friendly links between the present and the past. So it is pleasant rather than otherwise to find that those quaint people who now sleep in their rocky tombs, had a ceremonial anniversary, falling in the Egyptian calendar at the very time of our Christmas, and which celebrated an interesting religious legend, as precious to them as our gospel truth is to us.

This ancient Egyptian Christmas, the very oldest that we know of, was known as the Festival of Horus.

Perhaps no other race was ever so profoundly religious as the old Egyptians. The most important element in the life of any nation, that which beyond aught else forms and influences its character, which underlies all its customs and comes to the surface in a thousand various and surprising ways is always its religion. But with the dwellers by the Nile their religion was everything. The whole being of the people was permeated by it. Literature and science were little more than branches of theology. The every-day life of an Egyptian was guarded and directed by a series of religious precepts and usages. Every province had its special divinities, its own peculiar rites, its special sacred animals.

But though there were so many deities, and, by the way, those different gods were not so much personalities as personifications (my young readers must look into the dictionary for the meaning of these words if they do not understand them), they had but one great Worshipped One. Their fundamental doctrine was that God is one, unrepresented, invisible. As God, however, acts upon the world, his various attributes or modes of manifestation were represented in various forms. As the Creator he was Ptah; as the Revealer he was Amun; as the Benefactor and Judge of men, he was Osiris, and so on through an endless line of primary, secondary, and tertiary characters, which to the uneducated became in process of time so many separate divinities.

Osiris was practically the god worshipped in Egypt; since, while all other worships were local, his was universal. He was called the "Eldest," the "King of the Gods," the "Lord of Life," the "Eternal Ruler," the "Manifestor of Good," and many other titles. A peculiar character of mildness, goodness, and beneficence attached to him. Associated with him always was Isis, his wife, and their child Har or Horus. And here we find the first instance of a trinity, so blending and interchanging their attributes that they were emphatically one in three and three in one.

There is a vagueness, an indistinctness, in the theology of that ancient creed, at least it seems so to us who are accustomed to the clear cut definitions of Christianity; and yet there seems to have been something like our idea of the triune Godhead shadowed in the story of Isis, Osiris, and Horus. But it was shadowed, not revealed. Each sustained every relation of a complete life to the other, and in different phases of their worship one member became relatively another; only tenaciously Isis was the feminine one of the triad. It is a beautiful illustration of the gallantry of those old pagans, and of their reverence for the nobleness and worth of maternal life, that in the mention of the three names together, Isis, Osiris, and Horus, the mild goddess was always named first.

The most interesting article of Egyptian mythology is the appearance of Osiris on earth for the benefit of mankind, under the title of Manifestor of Goodness and Truth; his death by the malice of Seth and Typhon, the Evil One, and his burial and resurrection. It was this legend which was brought in the Festival of Horus. The whole celebration was designed to illustrate the story of the Holy Family, Isis, Osiris, and Horus, and symbolically taught resurrection, judgment, the punishment of sin, the temporary triumph of evil, and the ultimate victory of good.

All the latter part of the month Chiock—the December of the Egyptians, was devoted to this celebration, which had its culmination about the season of our own sacred and festive holiday. Every day of the ceremonial had its designated part in the programme. The whole population turned out; the temples smoked with incense, and the palaces were radiant with light. There were gay processions, there were shouting and music, there was crowning with garlands, there was scattering of flowers.

It must have been a grand affair, this Egyptian festival of Horus, in the old days of the Thothmes and the Rameses. We can imagine the cities and villages all in their glory, the stately Nile flowing through them, all its waters covered with barges and pleasure galleys, its shores bordered by the pillared porticoes of villas, the propylæ of temples, and by groves and gardens; beyond, on the sandy plain, the pyramids towering aloft, vast and mighty like the works of fabled genii; and everywhere the gleaming sunlight flashing upon bright stuccoed walls and columns, and grim sphinxes and graceful obelisks, and river wave and rustling palms, steeping every color in a golden glow.

Very strange to us would seem some of the customs of that long-ago Pagan Christmas. For four successive days a cow, emblematical of Isis, was veiled in black and led about by a crowd of devotees, who beat their breasts, in memory of the supposed disappearance of Osiris from the earth and his wife's search for him, while in memory of his recovery a procession was made to the great temple of the deity, the priests carrying a sacred ark, and an image or emblem of Osiris fashioned out of earth and water, having been placed in it the declaration was made, "Osiris is found! Osiris is found!" amid general rejoicing.

On the last day of all took place "The Procession of the Obelisk." This was the crowning ceremonial in honor of Horus, as the youthful or rising sun. The day's ceremonial opened with a hymn sung to the god at the temples celebrating his countless excellencies. Then his image was brought out, that of a beautiful youth with a hawk's head surrounded by the double crown of the two Egypts, with the sacred asp in front, while in his hands he bore the symbol of life and the sceptre. The procession, numbering thousands, marched to an obelisk or pillar, on which was recorded the dates of the rising and setting sun for the year, and then a sacrifice took place of a dog, a sheep, and a cat, these animals all having helped either with finding of the body of Osiris, or in gaining for Horus the victory of Typhon.

The myth was the picture of the daily life of the sun combating darkness, yet at last succumbing to it, to appear again in renewed splendor, as the young Horus triumphs over Typhon. It was also a picture of human life, its perpetual conflict and final seeming destruction, to be restored in the new youth of a brighter existence. In this view suffering is not wholly evil, but has its beneficent aspect in the accomplishment of final good.

Thus, in the long-ago ages, before the infant Jesus had slumbered in his Christmas cradle at Bethlehem, the religious thought of a nation and the religious needs of a people foreshadowed the unfolding of the present dispensation.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

CHRISTMAS CAROL—SHEPHERDS WATCHING.

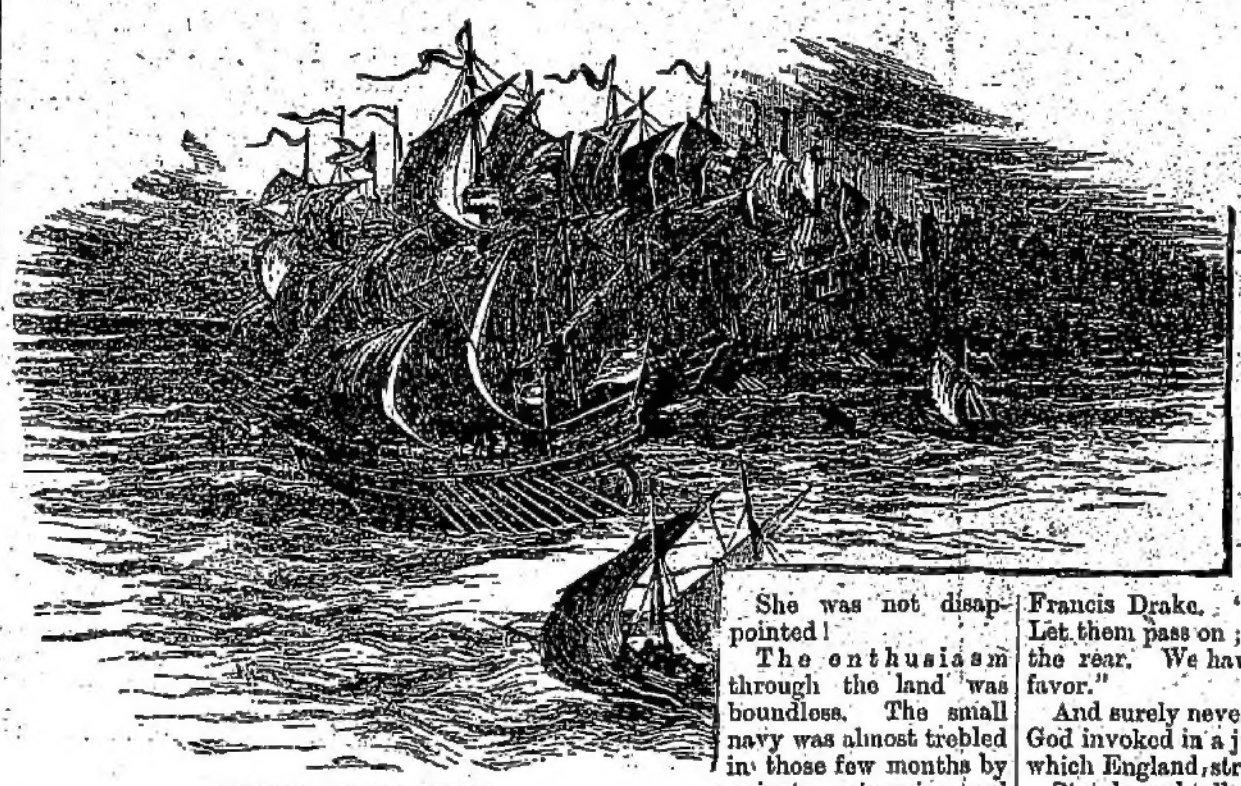
Lively.
They were watch-ing on the hill-side for the' com-ing day.
With the star-ry folds of night a-bove them spread, When a glo-ry flash'd a-
round them like a ray, Thro' the pearl-y, por-tals on them shed. "Glo-ry to
CHORUS. ff
God in the high-est," came float-ing on the air, "Glo-ry to God in the
high-est," seem'd ring-ing ev-'ry-where; "Glo-ry, glo-ry," O chil-dren, come, sing that
song a-gain, "Glo-ry to God in the high-est, good will and peace to men."

Louder swell the joyful anthems of the angel throng.
Over hill and dale the strains enchanted float;
See the wond'ring shepherds listening to the song,
Trembling, yet rejoicing at the sight.
CHORUS.—"Glory to God in the highest," etc.

O the joyful, joyful tidings! for to you is born
Christ, the wondrous Saviour, and the mighty King;
Hail ye waiting nations! hail the happy morn,
Joyful tidings unto you I bring.
CHORUS.—"Glory to God in the highest," etc.

IN THE DAYS OF THE GREAT ARMADA.

(By Crona Temple in Sunday at Home.)



APPROACH OF THE ARMADA.

CHAPTER III.

Daniel Lavin's sloop was not the only vessel that was being hurried to sea that July Sunday evening, as the Spanish fleet came slowly up the Channel.

For weeks, aye, for months past, men's minds had been full, and their tongues busy, with reports of what Philip was doing; and noblemen and gentlemen, down to the humblest squire who owned money or could command "a following," were bracing themselves for defence. Ships were fitted out at private charges, volunteers were pressing forward to man them, and from end to end of England there was but one resolve—to beat off the invader or to die in the attempt.

Some few Englishmen there were who yet clung to the rule of Rome; and to them this threatened subjugation of their country was the only way—a dreadful and sorowful way, it is true—but the only way of restoring England to the bosom of the Catholic Church. Others there were who, while not Protestant, yet preferred their country to the Popedom.

Mary of Scotland, the Roman Catholic heiress of the throne, was dead, and her son James was of the Reformed Faith. Pope Sixtus V. had issued a proclamation absolving the subjects of Elizabeth from all allegiance to her rule, and formally assigning the kingdom to Philip of Spain "as lineal descendant of the Plantagenets." There was also a blasphemous promise that whosoever should help the cause of the Church of God by the conquest of England and destruction of heresy, they should have indulgence for former sins, and remission from scores of years of the pains and terrors of purgatory.

It was, therefore, not only a foreign foe that the country was preparing to resist; men were making ready to strike for all things most precious to them—for freedom, for faith, for very existence itself.

It is difficult to realize now, in these days of stability and peace, what our forefathers felt and feared *three hundred years ago*. They had no regular army; their coasts were practically undefended; their navy, twenty-eight sail all told, was composed of ships small and few indeed compared with the enormous flotilla which was being prepared in the ports of Spain, Sicily, Naples, Portugal, and the Netherlands. The sailors serving with the fleet did not exceed fifteen thousand men.

But if their danger was great their hearts were dauntless. It was not only Doris's lover, young Robert Bulteel, who believed that England would prove herself victorious, no matter what force King Philip might bring.

And the bravest heart in England was that of Elizabeth, that "lion-like woman" who, despite her faults, and her faults were many—had a courage equal to that of any man. She was not in the least dismayed, the danger only roused her daring soul. She knew her cause was righteous, and she knew also that her people would be true to her and to themselves.

She was not disappointed!

The enthusiasm through the land was boundless. The small navy was almost trebled in those few months by private enterprise and generosity. The queen sent to the city of London to ask what contingent of ships and men could be furnished to meet this direful need. The Lord Mayor asked what force the city was expected to furnish.

"Five thousand men, and fifteen ships," was the royal reply.

After two days of deliberation the Londoners offered ten thousand men-at-arms and thirty well-found vessels; and upon the equipment of this force they spared no care or cost.

But if the preparations had been enthusiastic the thrill that ran through the south country when it was known that the Armada was actually in British waters made every heart beat high as with the stir of victory.

NEWS OF THE ARMADA.

An old writer, Camden, tells how the Spanish fleet came on, "the ships with lofty turrets like castles in front, like a half-moon, the wings thereof spreading out about the length of seven miles, sailing very slowly, though with full sails, the winds being, as it were, tired with carrying them, and the ocean groaning under the weight of them." And in truth it was the mightiest fleet that at that time had ever swept the ocean—one hundred and fifty huge galleons and men-of-war, having on board twenty-nine thousand men, soldiers, sailors, and galley-slaves.

And on the sea-coast of the Netherlands there waited, as was well-known, the Duke of Parma, with an army of forty thousand men, ready to fling himself on the shores of Essex as soon as the Spaniards should make good their landing; and then at one blow should be decided the fall and fortunes of England.

The wind blew free and fair, and the crisp waves of the Channel rolled gaily in the sun as the proud array came onwards. One Hemming, a freebooter—a pirate, if all the truth were told—caught sight of their blazoned sails and streaming flags, and he made haste with the news to Plymouth Bay.

At Plymouth were the English captains, the High Admiral, Lord Howard of Effingham, Drake, and Hawkins, and Frobisher, men who had already measured their wits and their stout swords against Spain. They listened to Hemming's eager tale with a grim smile on their lips. They were glad this uncertainty was over at last; they were glad to know that the foe was really in sight.

Over and over again has the story been told of their cool courage and good hope. Poets have sung, and authors written about the little knot of men on Plymouth Hoe that sunny day in July; painters have tried to show the semblance of their intrepid faces and gallant bearing, and men's hearts have been stirred from that day until now, the space of full three hundred years, by the memory of those brave sailors and true men.

"There needs be no hurry," said Sir Francis Drake. "They come, do they? Let them pass on; we will harry them in the rear. We have fair winds and God's favor."

And surely never was the great Name of God invoked in a juster cause than that for which England struck that day!

Stately and tall showed the Spanish ships as they rose and rolled on the running sea. They were crowded with the flower and chivalry of the South. There was scarcely a noble house in Aragon or Castile, in Genoa or Savoy, that had not sent sons or scions upon this quest of glory—and more than glory! for was it not the cause of Holy Church itself? Highborn ladies had sewed those silken banners, priests had blessed them, kings and princes had watched them hoisted to the wind. And there could be no doubt, no doubt at all, but that those sacred standards would presently wave over the realm of England, and over the humbled head of its heretic queen.

In the teeth of the south breeze Lord Howard's little fleet was towed and manœuvred clear of the bay. A shout went up from the English as they sighted their foe from the tops of the Admiral's ship, the "Ark Raleigh." There was no fear in those gallant hearts; the sight of the odds against them, terrific as those odds were, only roused within them every grain of pluck and valor they possessed. The yards were squared; the canvas every stitch of it was set, and like hounds set free from the leash the small ships rushed forward in chase of their prey.

CHAPTER IV.

On board the Ark-Raleigh was Robert Bulteel. He was a man worthy of Doris, judging by the look of him, as he stood by the taffrail with folded arms watching the pace at which they were gaining on the Spaniards. He was square-built and wide-chested, with frank, grey, piercing eyes, and a broad strong forehead, a strong man altogether, one who had mastered life's hardest lesson, that of obedience and reverence, and had thereby grown but the stronger and more fit to rule.

Thomas Clatworthy had been doubtful as to the wisdom of allowing him to try to win Doris for his wife; the girl was young, too young, he said; and the Clatworthys, though simple yeoman-folk, had always been of note and repute in the Exe valley, and Robert Bulteel was a stranger. He had been brought as a child to Exmouth by an old man—a curious old man—who was reputed by the superstitious to deal in magic and charms, but who lived inoffensively enough by dressing skins and stitching them into the wallets which every traveller and horseman required in those days. After his death, the lad Robert had earned his bread on board first one and then another of the little trading vessels that carried merchandize between England and Flanders; or it might be, as a greater adventure, found their way into the Mediterranean, whence, if they were fortunate, they returned with cargoes rich enough to make ample amends for the risks they had run.

Robert did not come empty handed when he asked Clatworthy to give him his Doris. He had prospered wonderfully, and had won his way upwards until he owned part—but a small part truly—of the craft in which he sailed. And it was not only his prosperity that induced Master Clatworthy to give his consent. Doris loved him; and the father could not bear to see those sweet eyes of hers sad with tears.

So Robert and Doris were betrothed. "You must wait," said Clatworthy, "wait awhile until you know better what are life's meanings. She is so young, Robert; and as for thee, thou hast yet to learn that success, aye, even happiness itself, is not the best at which we can aim. God rules the small as well as the great; think reverently of him, Robert, and he will teach thee things which as yet thou has not known the need of knowing."

His words fell on their ears as the rain falls on the smooth shore-stones. They were so happy that they indeed "felt no need" of those higher things of which he spoke.

Then came the rumors of danger, the news of the arming of that huge force that was to overwhelm the land. Not a trader crossed the seas but brought back word of the terrible engines of destruction that were being forged to hurl death and doom on England. The harbors of Spain were choked with war-like stores, the ports of the Mediterranean were busy with the building of the warships that were to bear them. On every side could be heard and seen the preparations for the "Invincible Armada."

It was no time to think of love or marriage. And Robert Bulteel unclasped Doris's hands from about his neck and bade her take heart of grace. He laughed as he kissed away her tears of distress, saying, she was not fit to be a seaman's wife if she shook and shivered over sorrow that might never come. "I have joined the Admiral's ship," he said. "It is worth something to tread the same decks with such a bold true man as is Lord Howard of Effingham! Look up, sweet-heart, and give me joy! I am going to fight side by side with heroes, and may end in being a hero myself—who knows?"

He was a hero already in poor Doris's opinion; but she did not say so for the reason that her bitter crying made all speech most difficult just then. And so he left her, and took his way to Plymouth, where the "Ark-Raleigh" was getting her powder on board at the quay beneath the Hoe.

And now, on the 22nd of July, the moment of action had come. The time for snatching at reports and vague stories was past; here in the British seas was the great fleet; here before their eyes were the fighting-ships and galleons of Spain.

(To be Continued.)

GOOD-BYE.

THE BEST CHRISTMAS YET.

(Continued from Second Page.)

the store, but when Mamie and I opened the big Santa Claus bundle and took out the dolls, what do you think, but poor little Jessie said, 'Oh! Oh!' then ran and bounced her head into her mamma's lap and cried hard, and Mamie, she cried, too. And, papa! Mamie and I want dreadfully to make you promise something—oh, will you, please—please?"

Mr. Burleigh smiled at the long recital, delivered almost in a breath, and ending with the pleading entreaty.

"Let me hear what it is first, little daughter," he said.

"Well, won't you always let us go without our Christmas presents, and give mamma lots of money for us to spend making other folks happy? The boys want to just as much as we do."

"We'll see, my little darling," said Mr. Burleigh, affectionately stroking the bright head, "we'll see."

"I never knew before to-day," began Mamie, a womanly ring in her childish voice, "what a beautiful, beautiful place my home is. I never thought about the carpets, and the pictures, and the nice heat, and the table-cloths and silver, and, oh, all the beautiful, lovely things we have. "Papa," she added impetuously. "I think it would a-been awful wicked for us to have had presents to-day; I do, really!"

"Funny how we all feel about the house," said Joe, with an odd little smile. "Fred and I woke up when we came home this noon, and thought how beautiful it looked and felt."

Mr. and Mrs. Burleigh exchanged glances, then the father said, very softly:

"My precious children, you have had your first real experience to-day in doing good and testing the truth of the words of the Saviour, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Then you have learned thus early a most useful, important lesson, which many persons fail to learn through a long life. In order to appreciate the blessings with which you are daily surrounded, go to the homes of those who are denied many of the bounties and mercies freely bestowed upon you by a kind heavenly Father."

"Oh, dear," said Bessie, with a prodigious yawn, "I hope I'll live to see a thousand Christmases and every one will be a 'give-away' day!"

"I hope they will," said mamma, cheerily."—*Ex.*

WHAT WILL THOU HAVE ME TO GIVE?

Mr. N. R. Cobb, of Boston, a prosperous merchant, adopted the following rule: To give from the outset one quarter of the net profits of his business; should he ever be worth twenty thousand dollars, to give one-half; and three-fourths if ever worth thirty thousand. This resolution he kept until his death, at the age of thirty-six, when he had acquired fifty thousand dollars, and was giving all his profits. Zaccheus gave one-half. When John Wesley's income was thirty pounds, he gave two pounds to the poor; when it was sixty pounds, he gave away thirty-two pounds; and when in the fourth year it was one hundred and twenty pounds, he gave ninety-two pounds. His prayer was, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to give?" Shall we "give until we feel it?" My dear friends, this rule would not secure universal liberality, as some Christians could not give twenty-five cents without keenly feeling it—their avarice is so great.—*Robt. Randolphe.*

A MERRY MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Our Christmas greetings this year look out from every page of our Christmas number and we would now close with the hope that the cordial relations existing between us and our readers in the past may long continue. We would also at this time wish special success to all our workers and express our belief that through their efforts we shall, before another year is over, reach many thousand more. In the meantime we cross the threshold of fifty thousand homes in this land of ours and wish every one, old and young, with all our heart,

A MERRY, MERRY CHRISTMAS.

"AN OLD FRIEND."

Oh, Santa Claus is a friend indeed,
The little ones love him dearly;
He knows so exactly what they need,
In the tiniest stockings his eyes can read
The wants of the owners clearly.

With thoughts of his gifts their dreams are bright
As they wonder where he is hiding,
And how he can do so much in a night,
From the realms of the Frost King cold and white
On the wings of the north wind riding.

There are presents for all in his splendid store,
But nobody feels quite certain
Which way he goes when his task is o'er,
Whether up the chimney or under the door,
Or through a chink in the curtain.

"We knew he would come," the children say
As they reckon their new-found pleasures;
"It wouldn't have seemed like Christmas Day
If Santa Claus had not found a way
To leave us some of his treasures!"

And grown-up children, who walk by sight,
Their innocent trust might borrow,
And leave their wishes in faith at night
Before the Giver of all delight,
To find them filled on the morrow!

—*Leisure Hour.*

ALL CANADA'S SCHOOLS

ARE INVITED TO JOIN IN A NATIONAL COMPETITION.

Stories of adventure, tales of success through greatest obstacles, of gallant endeavors which have resulted in failure equally honorable abound in this country. Farms and fortunes were not hewn out of the Canadian forests without the exercise of a heroism which must command attention and admiration wherever known. The old men and women who are telling these stories now to their children and grand-children are rapidly passing away; even their sons and daughters will soon leave us. No good Canadian story should be allowed to pass into oblivion. There are hundreds of them of sufficient interest to light the fire of genius. The *Witness* wants to gather them. We therefore set the task of recounting their country's glories and collecting the material for her history and poetry to the young people of the schools. Any good story, whether of trouble or of fun, any good description of pioneer life and surroundings, may be the groundwork of the tale which is to take the prize.

There are in Canada and Newfoundland counties as follows:—New Brunswick, 15; Prince Edward Island, 3; Nova Scotia, 18; Quebec, 60; Ontario (with districts), 48; Manitoba, 26; British Columbia (electoral divisions), 5; and counties as one, each, Alberta, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, and Keewatin, and Newfoundland 2—180. There are also the cities of Charlottetown, St. John's (Nfld), Hamilton, Kingston, London, Ottawa, Toronto, Brantford, St. Catharines, Belleville, Guelph, Montreal, Hull, Sherbrooke (county and city), Quebec, Three Rivers, St. Hyacinthe, Halifax, St. John, Fredericton, Winnipeg, Victoria, 22, making a grand total of 203.

We offer to the school children of each county, or city, as a prize, "Macaulay's History of England," in five volumes, strongly and neatly bound in cloth, for the best true story of adventure or tale descriptive of pioneer life, the scene of which is laid in the county or city in which the narrator resides.

But this is not all. The 203 stories which have won what we, for shortness, shall call "*Witness* County Prizes," will be submitted to a commission in each province which will decide which of the number is considered the best, and award a "*Witness* Provincial Prize," which will be a complete set of Parkman's works, ten volumes in all, worth $15. For this prize, Alberta, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, and Keewatin, will be grouped with Manitoba.

These eight essays, which have been thus selected, will be then referred to some high authority and that which will be adjudged the best will receive a further prize of a Remington No. 2 Typewriter, with cabinet, which sells for $125. This we will call the "*Witness* Dominion Prize."

In addition, to render the interest more general, a copy of the *Northern Messenger* will be sent for a year to the writer of the best story from each school, as decided by the teacher, but the teacher's judgment will not necessarily be followed by the judges of the county prizes. Further, every competitor will receive a card showing that he or she had a part in this great Dominion competition.

As it is almost impossible that any scholar would be able to obtain the necessary information without assistance the question of the amount of assistance which might be given would become a vexatious one. To simplify the matter, each competitor will be permitted to get all the assistance possible from any source whatever. But the story must be in the handwriting of the competitor, and the fact that the writer is a regular pupil of the school must be certified to by the head teacher thereof.

THE PRIZES.

1 Dominion prize, price	$ 125
8 Province prizes, at $15	120
203 County prizes, at $5	1,015
	$1,260

We hope to receive the assistance of teachers and trustees and all interested to make this competition most useful and interesting.

Address all correspondence and requests for fuller information to

JOHN DOUGALL & SON,
MONTREAL, QUE.
(Dominion Competition.)

Question Corner.—No. 26.

PRIZE BIBLE QUESTIONS.

66. What prophecy in Jeremiah was fulfilled shortly after the birth of Christ, and how?
67. When was the prophecy in the first three verses of Isaiah LXI fulfilled?

THE CLOSE OF PRIZE COMPETITION.

Our prize Bible Questions close with this number, and we imagine all the workers and their *friends* are anxiously awaiting the results. We hope to be able to give them early in January. The number of competitors has far exceeded our expectations and the amount of work has increased accordingly. Send in your answers to these last just as soon after you receive the paper as you can possibly find them.

We close this competition with our best wishes to our young Bible Students for a Merry, Merry Christmas. Our New Year's greetings we will leave for our next number when we hope to be able to set before them a new plan for Bible study, something entirely different to what we have ever given them before, and which we think will prove even more pleasant than the work this year has been.

RENEW AT ONCE.

If your subscription ends with the year renew at once to prevent what is otherwise unavoidable loss of time in having your name taken off our books. When this is not done the subscriber is liable to lose a number or two and so render imperfect his yearly file. When you are renewing send the subscriptions of half a dozen of your neighbors as well, and so secure one of our premiums.

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CANADA:
PROVINCE OF QUEBEC,
District of Montreal.

SUPERIOR COURT.

Dame FRANCES EAGLESON, wife *commune en biens* of John Frederick Wolff, of the City and District of Montreal, Merchant, Plaintiff,

vs

The said JOHN FREDERICK WOLFF, Defendant.

An action *en separation de biens* was instituted in this matter on the 5th inst.

Montreal, 20th November, 1888.

BUTLER & TIGHTHALL,
Attorneys for Plaintiff.

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